AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Gartner has released the following reports about IT services in India & China:

Market Overview: IT Services Providers in India:

This report provides information on market overview for India's IT outsourcing, consulting and systems integration service providers.

India-Based IT Service Providers Tap Into China's Potential:

This report provides insight into the Indian IT service companies that are establishing presence in China to leverage China's software resources and labor pool, and penetrate the Japanese market and mitigate cost pressures, which will benefit India's Global Presence from these developments.

Market Overview Update: IT Services Providers in China:

This Chinese market overview highlights, which service providers, have achieved stronger market shares than others in certain market categories.

(d) and (e) Gartner has prepared report on outsourcing and the misconception that offshore outsourcing has caused lose of jobs. This report provides some of the offshore outsourcing myths that have been a subject of significant debate. Gartner dispels a common misconception that offshore outsourcing has caused many white-collar jobs to disappear.

Tele-Density in Rural Areas

†2532. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI:
SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the average of current telephone density in rural areas of the country;

(b) whether Government are working on any plan to increase tele-density in rural areas;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the complete details thereof;

(d) whether Government have held discussions with private companies in this regard; and

(e) the target set by Government to increase tele-density in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The tele-density in the rural areas of the country is 1.74% as on 30th June, 2005.

(b) to (d) Yes, Sir. The following steps are taken to increase the rural tele-density:

(i) A non-lapsable Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has been set up to provide support for expansion of telecommunication services in rural and remote areas. Both public and private sectors licensees are eligible for such support. The public and private sector operators have been awarded tenders for provisioning of Rural Dirct Exchange Lines (R-DELs) in all the 1685 net cost positive Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) through the support from USOF. Support for maintenance of Villages Public Telephones (VPTs) and setting up of Rural Community Phones (RCPs) is also provided through through USOF. As far as the remaining net cost negative (Viable) SDCAs are concerned, market forces are expected to take care of the emerging demand in rural areas.

(ii) Large-scale deployment of WLL network in rural areas has been planned by BSNL.

(iii) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has relaxed the distance for laying outdoor cables from 2.5 Km to 5.0 for Landline exchanges to facilitate large coverage in the rural areas from the existing exchanges.

(iv) BSNL is deploying its Mobile Network in all the Highways, Important towns, Pilgrim Centers and State Highways to give incidental coverage to large parts of rural areas.

(v) In addition to the efforts made by BSNL, the private operators are also offering their servives to meet the demand for telephones.

(e) The Government has fixed target of 3% tele-density in rural areas by March 31, 2007 and 4% by the end of 2010.

New Post Offices in Maharashtra

2533. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:
SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for opening up new Post Offices in Maharashtra during the current financial year; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Details of these proposals are given below:

Sl. No.	Name of the Location	Status	Name of Region
1	Ganesh Colony	DSO	Aurangabad
2	HUDCO	DSO	Aurangabad
3	Shivaji Nagar	DSO	Aurangabad
4	Ganeshnagar	DSO	Pune
5	Vimannagar	DSO	Pune
6	Buzari Colony	DSO	Pune
7	Jule Solapur	DSO	Pune
8	Khanda Colony	DSO	Mumbai
9	Manji village	EDBO	Pune
10	Ranegaon village	EDBO	Pune
11	Kondwad	EDBO	Pune
12	Bhoinge	EDBO	Pune
13	Dabha	EDBO	Nagpur
14	SRPF Camp	EDBO	Nagpur

EDBO: Extra Departmental Branch Post Office
DSO: Department Sub Post Office